

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 HA-05 /082 W
-----105177 151650Z /64

R 151502Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8441
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, NI
SUBJECT: STUDENTS: THE POT STILL SIMMERS

REF: LAGOS 5827

1. SUMMARY: SOME UNIVERSITIES HAVE REOPENED AND EXCEPT IN ILORIN THE CAMPUS SITUATION APPEARS TO BE RETURNING TO NORMAL. STUDENT LEADERS HAVE ANNOUNCED A HUNGER STRIKE PENDING RELEASE OF THEIR NATIONAL PRESIDENT OKEOWO. OKEOWO'S LAWYER HAS WITHDRAWN FROM HIS SUIT FOR RELEASE SAYING HE IS UNABLE TO CONTINUE BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE. IF THE UNIVERSITIES ARE ABLE TO REOPEN WITHOUT FURTHER PROBLEMS ON CAMPUS, THE CRISIS WILL HAVE EFFECTIVELY PASSED. END SUMMARY.

2. A NUMBER OF UNIVERSITIES HAVE REOPENED IN THE LAST FEW DAYS INCLUDING NSUKKA, JOS, IBADAN AND ILORIN. THE TIMES REPORTED THAT STUDENTS HAVE FAILED TO RETURN TO THE ILORIN CAMPUS, BUT THE CAMPUS SITUATION APPEARS CALM OTHERWISE. THERE
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IS NO ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, BUT FACULTY MEETINGS HAVE BEEN HELD FOR SEVERAL DAYS TO DECIDE WHEN TO REOPEN.

3. FOUR LEADERS OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS (NONS) LED BY SECRETARY GENERAL FEMI OLUFAGBA ANNOUNCED THEY WERE GOING ON A HUNGER

STRIKE FRIDAY MAY 12 PENDING RELEASE OF NONS
PRESIDENT SEGUN OKEOWO AND OTHER STUDENTS WHO
REMAIN UNDER DETENTION. ON MAY 10
OLUFAGBA HAD ALSO CALLED ON STUDENTS TO CONTINUE
BOYCOTTING LECTURES UNTIL THE RECENT FEE INCREASE
IS RESCINDED AND THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT
(FMG) TRANSFERS THE STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM BACK
TO THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

4. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF FMG DELAYING TACTICS,
CHIEF GANI FAWEHINMI, WHO WAS OKEOWO'S LAWYER,
ANNOUNCED HE WAS WITHDRAWING FROM THE SUIT
DEMANDING RELEASE OF THE STUDENT LEADER. FAWEHINMI
SAID, "I CANNOT GO FURTHER. I WILL LEAVE THE
WHOLE MATTER TO THE BAR OF HISTORY." HE ADDED,
"I AM NOT IN THE LEAST OPTIMISTIC THAT IF YOU,
MY LORD, EVENTUALLY ORDER THE RELEASE OF OKEOWO
AS A RESULT OF ARGUMENT IN COURT, THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL (OF POLICE) AND THE PRISONS
DIRECTOR WILL OBEY THE ORDER. I AM UNABLE TO
SEE THE APPLICANT, I AM UNABLE TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS,
I AM UNABLE TO CONTINUE BECAUSE OF THE
ATTITUDE OF THE RESPONDENTS. TO CONTINUE WITH
THE PROCEEDINGS IS TIME WASTED." THE JUDGE ADJOURNED
THE HEARING UNTIL MAY 30.

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5. COMMENT: THE STUDENT CRISIS CONTINUES TO
SIMMER BUT THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT VIOLENCE
WILL BREAK OUT AGAIN. IF THE UNIVERSITIES
ARE ABLE TO REOPEN WITHOUT PROBLEMS ON CAMPUS,
THEN THE CRISIS WILL HAVE EFFECTIVELY PASSED.

THE FINAL AND CRUCIAL TEST WILL BE THE REOPENING
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS.
EASUM

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Message Attributes

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